RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 19th July, 2002/28 Asadha, 1924 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN *in the Chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*81. *[The questioner (Shri Anil Sharma) was absent for answer* vide *page 27 infra]*

Death of fish in Yamuna

*82. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newspaper report titled "Pollution authorities worry as fish die in Yamuna", which appeared in the Asian Age, New Delhi on 21st June, 2002; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to save aquatic life and ncrease the efficiency of sewage treatment plants in the river stretch of lhi?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of the incident of death of fishes in River Yamuna on 13th and 17th June, 2002 in the stretch from Agra to Bateshwar. The Central Pollution Control Board carried out detailed survey and water quality monitoring along this stretch. The findings of Central Pollution Control Board revealed that low flow in the river necessitated release of water in a regulated manner from Gokul Barrage. But instead there was a sudden release of water which may have resulted in scouring of organic matter in the river bed. High quantity of churned organic matter in the river water might have lead to depletion of oxygen and resulting in fish mortality.

The steps taken by the Government to save aquatic life and to increase the efficiency of the sewage treatment plants in the river stretch of Delhi are as under :—

(i) Directions under Section 18(1)(b) of the Water Act, 1974 have been issued by the Central Pollution Control Board to the concerned State Boards along the River Yamuna including the State of Delhi for taking steps to properly operate and maintain the sewage treatment plants, provide facilities for collection and treatment of sewage, to comply with the effluent standards strigently for industries located along river Yamuna and to maintain basic minimum flow for protection of the aquatic life besides other directions.

(ii) Under Yamuna Action Plan Phase-I, pollution abatement schemes have been undertaken in 8 towns of Uttar Pradesh and 12 towns of Haryana besides Delhi. The physical progress of the works is 95 per cent.

(iii) The Delhi Government has taken the following measures:—

(a) Improvement of the capacity utilization of sewage treatment plants by desilting and rehabilitation of trunk sewer.

(b) Upgrading the existing capacity of sewage treatment plants by improving the various parameters of pollution.

(c) The performance of sewage treatment plants in minitored on quarterly basis.

(d) The effluent standards for sewage treatment plants has been made more stringent with respect to Biochemicals Oxygen Demand (10 miligrams per litre as against 30 miligrames per litre) and Total Suspended solids (15 miligrams per litre as against 50 miligrams per litre).

(e) Organising training courses by Delhi Productivity Council for the staff engaged for operation and maintenance of sewage treatment plants.

(iv) A High Powered Committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of Member (Environment), Planning Commission with Chief Secretaries of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh as members, to discuss various issues for maintaining the minimum flow in river Yamuna.

(v) A Water Quality Assesment Authority and State Level Review Committees have been constituted to ensure the maintenance of water quality of surface and ground waters.

श्री भगत राम मनहर : सभापति जी, नदियों का जल प्रदूषित होने से जलचर प्राणियों के जीवित रहने की समस्या गंभीर हो गयी है। यमुना नदी ही नहीं बल्कि देश की करीब-करीब सभी नदियों का पानी प्रदूषित हो चला है। यमुना नदी तो अब गंदा नाला बनकर रह गयी है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि यमुना नदी में स्वच्छ जल बहे, इसके लिए सरकार ने क्या व्यवस्था की है?

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, this question pertains to the River Yamuna.

श्री भगत राम मनहर: मान्यवर, सरकार ने और खासकर पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने बहुत से नियम व कायदे-कानून बनाए हैं। मान्यवर, प्रदूषण को दूर करने के लिए सारी नदियों के किनारे संयंत्र लगे हुए हैं, लेकिन संयंत्र लगाने वाले पर्यावरण के मापदण्डों को लागू नहीं करते हैं। उसकी देखभाल और रख-रखाव के लिए भी आपने बहुत-सी कमेटियां बना दी हैं। मान्यवर, मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि नियमों का पालन न करने वालों के ऊपर कब कार्यवाही होगी और क्या आप ने ऐसे लोगों के ऊपर दण्डात्मक कार्यवाही करने की कोई व्यवस्था की है?

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, whether it is the Ganga Action Plan or the Yamuna Action Plan, the responsibility for dealing with pollution in the rivers rests mainly with the local authorities or the State Governments. So far as Delhi is concerned, the main culprit of pollution is the discharge of sewage in the Yamuna river. Whether it is the responsibility of the State Government or the Central Government, I would like to point out that we have to put our heads together so see that remedial measures are taken in this regard. Even today, the Cabinet Secretary had a meeting with the Water Resources Secretary. Other Secretaries, experts, and Chief Secretaries of the States attended the meeting. A monitoring set-up is already there in the Ministry. From time to time, the Central Pollution Control Board is also taking action. We are taking remedial measures, as far as the question of pollution in the Yamuna river is concerned.

प्रो॰ रामगोपाल यादव: श्रीमन्, गंगा एक्शन प्लान फेस-2 के अंतर्गत यमुना को प्रदूषण मुक्त करने के लिए कई जगह काम शुरू किए गए हैं। मंत्रालय ने जो उत्तर दि[illegible] है, उसमें कहा गया है कि इस पर 95 परसेंट काम पूरा हो गया है। इससे पहले सी॰ए॰जी॰ ने लिखा था कि गंगा एक्शन प्लान के अंतर्गत जो पैसा फेस-2 के लिए दिया गया था, वह पैसा खर्च नहीं किया जा रहा है।

मान्यवर, यह उत्तर तथ्यों के खिलाफ है क्योंकि मैं स्वयं जानता हूं कि हमारे यहां इटावा में गंगा एक्शन प्लान फेस-2 के अंतर्गत यमुना पर जो काम होना था, वह दो साल से बंद है। कहा यह जा रहा है कि कोई पैसा नहीं है जबकि सी०ए०जी० कहता है कि पैसा खर्च नहीं कर रहे हैं। मंत्री जी, आपने अगर सी०ए०जी० की रिपोर्ट न देखी हो, तो कृपया देख लीजिए। यमुना की सफाई के काम के लिए आप ने पैसा खर्च किया भी है, लेकिन उसमें एफ्लुएंट ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट काम ही नहीं कर रहे हैं, कभी उनका रिनुअल नहीं हो रहा है। इसके अलावा बिजली की आपूर्ति नहीं हो पा रही है। इसलिए मंत्री जी द्वारा दिए गए उत्तर तथ्यों से परे हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या वे संसद सदस्यों की कोई कमेटी भेजकर, जो आपने जवाब दिया, केवल आगरा में ही इसकी जांच कराने के लिए तैयार हैं कि क्या वहां ऐफ्लुएंट ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट काम कर रहे हैं और क्या नालों से सीधा पानी यमुना नदी में जा रहा है या नहीं।

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, the question pertains to the fish mortality. However, the hon. Member has put a question about the river Yamuna passing through Agra. I could only say that as far as the flow of river Yamuna at Agra is concerned, the dissolved oxygen in the river Yamuna at the Agra stretch is 0.9 mg/litre, whereas, the minimum is 5 mg per litre. The BOD level is 26.5 mg/litre whereas, the desired maximum level is 3 mg per litre. The total coliform level is 1.41 x 10 raised to the power 7 and the facal coliform level is 11.76 x 10 raised to the power 5.

Sir, as far as the river Yamuna is concerned, the total length of the river Yamuna is 1300 kms., whereas, the polluted stretch is only 526 kms. The highly polluted stretch falls in Delhi, which is 22 kms. In that stretch, we are trying to see that the quality of water is maintained. If 10 cusecs flow of water is maintained in Yamuna, there won't be much problem. But, the flow could not be maintained all the time. That is why, yesterday, the Cabinet Secretary convened a meeting of all the concerned Chief Secretaries, the Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources and the Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, in which it was decided that a credible action plan has to be drawn, and in the near future, we will draw a credible action plan. The Centre and the States are involved in this matter, and as such, the State Governments are also taking action. The Japanese Bank for International Cooperation has already come forward to give around Rs. 2,000 crores to finance this project, and before September-October, the agreement will be finalised. We will do our utmost in this regard.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: I think, because the question was put in Hindi, the Minister could not follow that. My point was that the answer given by the hon. Minister is factually incorrect. Is the Minister ready to assure the House that he will send a team of the Members of Parliament to look into these allegations that effluent treatment plants are not working at all, whereas, he has said that 95 per cent work has been completed. This answer is also incorrect. Is he ready to send a team of the hon. Members of Parliament? This was my question.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: The effluent treatment is mainly required for the waste water generated by the industry.

प्रो॰ रामगोपाल यादव: आगरा में यमुना में केवल गंदे नालों का पानी ही है। ओरिजनल पानी जो आता है ऊपर से, वह है ही नहीं। This is the problem.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Acutally, effluent is waste generated by the industry, and the river Yamuna is polluted because of the domestic waste water. We have to tackle the problem of domestic waste water first. For that purpose, we are drawing a plan of action, and about 16 STPs have already been constructed in Delhi. The effluent waste generated in Delhi is not flowing through the trunk sewer way, because, out of 135 kms of the trunk way, 91 kms is not functioning, and the State Government of Delhi has already done everything. It is in the process. So, unless we complete the entire stretch, we cannot stop this waste flowing into the river Yamuna. We have to implement the project as quickly as possible.

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister's reply is extremely unsatisfactory, in several respects. For example, in his reply, he has stated that directions under section 18(1)(b) of the Water Act, 1974, have been issued by the Central Pollution Control Board to the concerned State Boards along with River Yamuna. The question is not that directions have not been issued. But, are these directives being effectively implemented or not? His answer is completely silent on this. In the same way, the Minister has stated, in his reply that under the Yamuna Action Plan Phase-I, pollution abatement schemes have been undertaken in 8 towns of Uttar Pradesh and 12 towns of Haryana, besides Delhi. It is further stated that the physical progress of the works is 95 per cent. What does he mean by 'physical progress'? Is it that the works are still in the process of being completed or the level of satisfaction—the

objectives that are sought to be achieved by these works—is to the extent of 95 per cent? Obviously, the Minister's information is grossly out of tune with the harsh reality, as Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav has emphasised.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, perhaps, I could not satisfy our Members. I may be wrong. I am very sorry. The Leader of the Opposition has just now mentioned the total number of projects. In UP, 8 towns have been taken up under the Yamuna Action Plan. In Haryana, 12 towns have been taken up under the Yamuna Action Plan, along with Delhi. Altogether, 21 towns have been taken up. Twenty-eight STPs are to be constructed to deal with 724 MLD. As far as this is concerned, we have completed 95 per cent, physically and financially. The total estimated cost of the project is Rs. 711 crores. Out of that, Rs. 655 crores worth of project sites have been completed.

श्री टी॰ एन॰ चतुर्वेदी: सभापति महोदय, रामगोपाल जी ने जो सप्लीमेंट्री में प्रश्न किया मैं समझता हूं कि वह बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण है और उसकी महत्ता को समझने के लिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से निवेदन करूंगा। I request him to realise the significance of the question of Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav, as also of the Leader of the Opposition. The fact of the matter is, whether it is under the Ganga Action Plan or the Yamuna Action Plan, a lot of money has been spent. But, actually, in the field, it has not yielded results. I would like to know whether it is the fault of the State Governments or whether it is because of lack of coordination between the State Governments and the Central Government or whether it is due to lack of directions from the Central Government. This is a matter which has to be looked into. May I again repeat what Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav has stated? Will the Minister send a combined team of various parties or various sections of the House to some of the projects to get a realistic picture of what is being done in the field and what is happening in the field and see whether what we are told has been achieve, as per the plan. There is a great difference between what is happening in the project sites and what we are told. My request to the Minister is that he should respond favourably to this question. He had called a meeting on the Ganga Action Plan long back. But, unfortunately, the letters in that connection reached the Members of Parliament much later. That is why I make this request.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, six months back, I had called a meeting of Members of Parliament, and, that too, during the session. Nearly 15 Members of Parliament come from this area. Sir, only three

Members came in that presentation. Even for the three Members of Parliament who came to attend the presentation, I had presented the entire matter, the Ganga Action Plan-I, the Ganga Action Plan-II, the Yamuna and everything.

श्री लालू प्रसाद: आप इसको स्पॉट पर ले जाइये, कागजों में मत रहने दीजिए।

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Anyhow, through you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I invite all the concerned Members of Parliament. I will definitely present the case before the Members of Parliament here next week itself. This itself can be treated as an invitation to Shri Chaturvediji and other Members of Parliament. At the same time, we should not find fault with the Ganga Action Plan or any such thing which has been executed. The total length of the Ganga is 2,525 kilometres; whereas we have dealt with only 15 to 20 per cent of it. How can we get cent per cent results? It is not possible. Sir, in Londan ...(*Interruptions*). I do not want to spend the Government money ...(*Interruptions*). Let me firt see the response in the presentation ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Every Member has got a Railway pass. No money will be wasted ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI T.R. BAALU: First of all, let me see the attendance. The hon. Members should understand the matter first. If they decide in that particular meeting, I can take them anywhere, wherever they want. Let us not waste the Government money. I have conducted many meetings, but the people do not come. Even the Secretaries of the State Governments do not come. ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Even the High Court of Allahabad had apppointed a Committee. That committee has also submitted a very detailed report which is with the Government of India. Whether it is the fault of the Uttar Pradesh Government or it is the fault of the Central Government, is not the question. The question is this. What you aimed to achieve, how far that has been accomplished? If it has not been accomplished, what are the reasons and what rectificatory action do you want to take? This question should be taken up in the constructive spirit. There is no desire at all to criticise the Department or the official machinery, whether it is the Engineering Department or the Administrative Department.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Whatever action the Government has taken, things have moved well. Why should we be hypocrites? We should understand the problem. We have not dealt with it fully. Therefore, we cannot have a hundred per cent result. It is not possible. We have spent very less money on it.

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: I do not want to enter into an argument. In the case of Varanasi also nothing has come out. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI T.R. BAALU: It has yielded good results.

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Nothing has been achieved. We have not achieved any success with whatever is there in the shape of pollution control. ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister has listed some measures from (a) to (e). These measures can be effective only if there is water. You are setting up Sewage Treatment Plants. You are setting up Effluent Treatment Plants. That is all right. But what do you mix up this water with? If you go and see, after the Wazirpur reservoir there is no water in the Yamuna. There is reservoir called the Wazirpur reservoir. After the Wazirpur reservoir there is no water flowing in the river. No matter what you do to the Sewage Treatment Plants or the Effluent Treatment Plants, what do you mix that up with when there is no water? I would request the Minister, please go to the site personally. It is a very serious problem. Delhi being the capital State and Mathura being a religious centre, unless you get water in Yamuna, the Yamuna cannot be cleaned. My question to the hon. Minister is this. Will you take this matter before the Inter-State Council? You have the Minister of Water Resources. Will you ask the State of Punjab to release water—not on account of the share of Haryana; that is one part—will you seek water from Punjab, through the Sutlej-Yamuna link so that there is enough water (1) to meet the drinking needs of Delhi; (2) for the purpose of preserving the flora and fauna; and (3) for the rivers to run? Now, the these reasons will the Central Government approach the Punjab Government to allow this Sutlej-Yamuna link so that there is enough water for Delhi and Mathura?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, my hon. friend has put a supplementary, a major portion of which pertains to the Water Resources Ministry, like, approaching the Punjab Government and so on. As far as the River Action Plan is concerned,—I am worried about the release of water—

ten cubic metres of water per second has to be released to maintain a steady flow. In fact, only for that purpose, yesterday, the Cabinet Secretary took a long meetinng with all the concerned States. I think it will yield very good result and in course of time, an action plan will be prepared. And, Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the Members are very much interested, there is no point arguing with them. I will take them on the visit provided the Rajya Sabha Secretariat is willing to provide funds for it.

SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Sir, there has been a general refrain all these while that there is not enough money to tackle the challenge of pollution. I am given to understand that the Japanese Government, through the OECF loan, has sanctioned a large amount of money for the specific purpose of cleaning the pollution in Yamuna. If that be so, how is the Central Government or the State Government concerned seeking to utilise this fund? And, of course, the question of water being made available from Punjab to the SYL does not arise out of this question, and, in any case, water has to be made available, and it has to be made available consistent with equities and the interests of the States concerned. Would the hon. Minister like to comment on this?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, I have already replied—we are at it that 10 cubic metres of water per second has to flow into Yamuna. Unless and until a steady flow is maintained, there is no way out especially for Delhi. At the same time, a lot of drainage water is coming into the river and is being discharged every day. Now, when we look at the size of the population, say, in 1961, it was 26 lakhs. After 41 years, the population in Delhi today is 140 lakhs. And what was the waste water generated at that time? It was 300 MLD in 1961 and the treatment was done of 254 MLD. now, out of 3,300 MLD of waste water which is generated every day, the treatment is done only for 2,325 MLD; the exising plant is able to treat only 2,325 MLD of water. So, we have to have in place a water treatment plant to treat that balance 975 MLD of water. And for this, we are negotiating with the JBIC. The negotiation is in advanced stage; we will be reaching an agreement very soon. Also, for that purpose, Rs. 2,000 crores worth of project is in the offing.

श्री लालू प्रसाद: महोदय, यह राष्ट्रीय समस्या है। शाहजहां के समय में कुत्ता या सियार भी यमुना का पानी पीकर आ जाता था। इतना शुद्ध था। क्या यह बात सही है कि जो पानी हरिद्वार से निकलकर यमुना में आता था, उस पानी को सिंचाई के लिए जो स्टार्टिंग प्वांइट है.....

सुश्री उमा भारती: हरिद्वार में तो यमुना आती ही नहीं।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: कहां से आती है?

सुश्री उमा भारती: सहारनपुर की तरफ से मुड़ जाती है। यमुना यमनोत्री से आती है। गंगा आती है।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: वहां दो कैनाल है। मैं भी वहां गया था।.....(व्यवधान)...

सुश्री उमा भारती: गंगा आती है।.....(व्यवधान)...

श्री लालू प्रसाद: महोदय, क्या यह बात सही है और सरकार को मालूम है कि यमुना का पानी सिंचाई के लिए दूसरी तरफ डायवर्ट किया जाता है और यमुना में पानी नहीं है। यमुना का जो बैड है, वह ऊंचा हो गया है। नाले का पानी जाने से, आप इसकी सफाई कब तक करेंगे? महोदय, यह राष्ट्रीय सवाल है, इस पर काफी पैसा खर्च होना है। क्या सरकार कोई इरादा रखती है कि यमुना गंगा में मिलती है और गंड़क में भी मिलती है, क्या इसके लिए कोई योजना है। गंगा फेज-। में आपने काम किया, लेकिन नाले का और इंडस्ट्री का जो गंदा पानी जाता है, उस पानी के ट्रीटमेंट का कोई प्रबन्ध आपने नहीं किया है तो सरकार इस दिशा में क्या सोच रही है? हमारी नदियों के पानी का करन्ट रहता है तो थोड़ा नाले का भी पानी रहता है तो गंदगी को दूर किया जा सकता था। इसको रोकने का आप क्या उपाय कर रहे हैं? बीजेपी शासन में गंगा-यमुना गंदी हो जाए, तो और चिंता का विषय है।

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, for the informationn of the House, the quantity of dissolved oxygen at Rishikesh is 9.1 milligrams per litre; the BOD is 1.1 milligrams per litre. At Patna, the quantity of dissolved oxygen is 7.8 milligrams per litre and the BOD is 1.9 milligrams per litre. As far as the issue of flow and diverson of water for irrigation and other things are concerned, it doesn't come under my portfolio, as the Minister of Environment and Forests.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया: सर, क्वेश्चन की कोई बात नहीं है ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have spent nearly half-an-hour on this question.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, could you kindly allow a discussion on pollution of water in the country?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will consider it. Next question.